



# Community Water Systems Total Coliform Monitoring Fact Sheet

## *Why Am I a Public Water System?*

“A Community Public Water System is any facility that has at least fifteen (15) service connections used by year-round residents and/or regularly serves at least twenty-five (25) year-round residents per year.”

## *How Does the Safe Drinking Water Act Apply to Me?*

As a community water system, your facility is required to sample for coliform bacteria at least once per month based on total population served. Please reference total coliform monitoring frequency table to identify minimum number of samples required per month. Population is based on number of service connections times 2.7 occupants.

## *Why is it Important to Sample for Total Coliform?*

Total coliforms are common bacteria in the environment and are generally not harmful themselves. The presence of these bacteria in drinking water indicates that the water may be contaminated with other organisms that may cause disease. Disease symptoms may include diarrhea, cramps, nausea, and vomiting.

## *How Do I Sample for Total Coliform?*

If your system serves fewer than 1,000 persons, you will sample at least once per month from an approved sampling site within the distribution system. If your system serves more than 1,000 persons, please reference the monitoring frequency table for number of required distribution samples to be collected per month.

If your system's routine test is unsatisfactory (test shows presence of coliform), you will be required to collect a set of 3 repeat samples (if more than 1 required distribution sample is taken per month) or 4 repeat samples (if only 1 required distribution sample is taken per month) and have them analyzed. At least 1 of the repeat samples must be collected from the same sample tap as the original unsatisfactory sample, 1 collected within five service connections upstream and 1 within five service connections downstream. If a 4th repeat sample is required then it may be collected anywhere in the distribution system. All repeat samples **must** be collected on the same day.

If any **repeat** sample is total coliform positive, your system has exceeded the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) and are required to post public notification or publish in the newspaper within the area served.

***Monitoring  
Frequency Table***

All public water systems are required to collect 5 distribution samples the month after any unsatisfactory total coliform sample (Example: *If you collect a routine sample on July 10 and it is total coliform positive, you will collect 3 or 4 repeat samples as soon as you are notified of the positive sample and you will also collect 5 routine samples in August.*)

***Who Do I Contact if  
I Have Any  
Questions?***

***Rule Citations***

Population Served	Minimum Number of Samples Monthly
25 to 1,000	1
1,001 to 2,500	2
2,501 to 3,300	3
3,301 to 4,100	4
4,101 to 4,900	5
4,901 to 5,800	6

If a system has a population higher than the above number the complete table can be found in 327 IAC 8-2-8(b).

You should contact the *IDEM Drinking Water Branch* if you have any questions. Our number is (317)308-3282. You may also contact the *IDEM Environmental Helpline* at (800)451-6027, or the *EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline* at (800)426-4791.

327 IAC 8-2-4, 327 IAC 8-2-4.1, 327 IAC 8-2-7, 327 IAC 8-2-8, and 327 IAC 8-2-8.1.

*This fact sheet is intended solely as guidance and does not have the effect of law or represent formal Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) decisions or final actions. This fact sheet shall be used in conjunction with applicable rules and statutes. It does not replace applicable rules and statutes, and if it conflicts with these rules and statutes, the rules and statutes shall control.*